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Ivan and Arne at the United Nations

At the end of January, a 41-year-old Norwegian diplomat was arrested at the Oslo Airport and charged with spying for the Soviet Union. The day before his arrest, Arne Treholt — chief of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's press section — had arranged a press conference for George Shultz, visiting U.S. secretary of state.

Is it really possible that one of Norway's best-and-brightest was involved in the Kremlin spy game? The answer probably can be found at the United Nations, which has become a hotbed of Soviet spy activity in the United States and a home-away-from-home training and recruitment base for aspiring officers of Moscow's KGB (secret police) and GRU (military intelligence).

Mr. Treholt previously had spent 3½ years (January 1979-June 1982) at the United Nations in New York, and five years (1974-1979) as a delegate to the U.N. Law of the Sea Conference. If he is indeed a Soviet agent, it is probably there that he was recruited and received his first assignment.

While details of Mr. Treholt's alleged espionage activities are still sketchy, there are no such doubts about Soviet penetration of the United Nations. This is where they make their scores — recruiting foreign operatives whose association with the Kremlin continues long past their halcyon days in New York City. What makes these activities even more insidious is that the U.S. taxpayer contributes 25 percent of the U.N. budget, or about \$1 billion a year to the U.N. system, while the Soviet Union, with its Ukrainian and Byelorussian satellites, pays only 4.21 percent. In fact, the Soviet

Union is currently behind in its U.N. payments by about \$200 million. What all this means is that the United States is helping to support a nest of Soviet spies operating on our own front steps. Both the Soviet mission and the U.N. professional staff provide a wealth of resources for Soviet espionage in New York, and throughout the United States.

In addition to the approximately 208 people the Soviets and their satellites maintain in key posts in the U.N. Secretariat, the Soviets have assigned 250 people to their New York mission. Altogether, it is estimated that there are some 680 Soviets and approximately 2,000 Eastern bloc "diplomats" in New York alone, and as many as a third or more are thought by Western intelligence sources to be operating as agents of their nation's intelligence services.

Dr. Juliana Pilon, Heritage Foundation senior policy analyst, describes the Soviet mission as a focal point for coordinating and directing the activities of all Soviet "diplomats" in New York — activities that include attempts to recruit diplomats from other countries, especially from the Third World. But it is not just diplomats from developing countries who provide enticing targets for New York-based Soviet agents. In the case of Arne Treholt, Soviets based at the United Nations were able to approach and may have been able to co-opt one of the highest-ranking diplomats from one of America's most important NATO allies.

Mr. Treholt's association with the United Nations and his suspected dealing with Soviet agents apparently go back much farther than 1979, when he began his tour of duty at the Norwegian mission in New York. In 1972, Mr. Treholt began service as personal secretary

and later as deputy minister to Jens Evensen, Norwegian minister of trade, who served from 1974 to 1979 as Norwegian ambassador to the U.N. Law of the Sea Conference. During this period, Mr. Treholt accompanied Mr. Evensen to Law of the Sea negotiations in Geneva, Caracas and New York, and apparently had access to highly classified Norwegian plans for wartime use of Norway's merchant navy.

Mr. Treholt himself probably did not play a significant role in the negotiations for this U.N. treaty, and his precise relationship with the Soviet Union during the period of negotiations is still unclear.

The Soviets have, however — particularly during the past decade — never concealed their desire to use the negotiations as a vehicle for obtaining highly developed Western mining technology, and as a means of denying the United States and its allies future access to critical strategic minerals from the deep seabed. The Reagan administration has fortunately decided that the United States will not sign the sea treaty, much to the chagrin of the Soviets.

U.N. offices in New York and throughout the world have served long enough as operations centers for agents of the Soviet and East European intelligence services.

The United States can begin to rectify this situation in the near term by seeking an immediate reduction in the size of Eastern-bloc and other communist missions in New York. The United States should also press the secretary-general to enforce Article 100 of the U.N. Charter, prohibiting improper cooperation with national governments by Secretariat employees.

The United States cannot and should not wait until another NATO diplomat at the United Nations is recruited before taking measures to curb Soviet espionage activities. There are too many secrets waiting to be given away.